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MENTAL CULTIVATION AMONG TEACHERS.

“ Stationary: fixed, not moving, not progressive.”—NOAH WEBSTER.

WE may talk as much as we will of the external hindrances to successful teaching, such as badly ventilated school-rooms, ill-arranged and ill-adapted text books, unappreciating pupils and censorious parents, but after all, the main hindrance lies in ourselves. We are too stationary; always inciting our pupils onward, we ever remain fixed ourselves; ever holding up the motto “ excelsior ” as the watchword of life, we ourselves refuse to obey its injunction.

Now to make ourselves and our profession respected, we must partake in the general movement around us. We must not be content to see men of all other occupations ambitious to perfect themselves in the work of their hands or brains, to rise and keep rising, with some position of honor ever before them to stimulate them onward, and yet allow ourselves to be mere passive spectators: “ our brethren are already in the field; why stand we here idle ? ” Our profession has no culminating point; there is room in it ever to ascend, and continually to gain new spheres of influence, fresh footholds of power.

We would not be understood by these remarks to imply that there is any want of earnestness to be deplored; we do not believe that the teachers of Massachusetts are lacking in zeal. But we do think that there is much power squandered, much force spent in the wrong direction. There is no class of men who toil like earnest teachers. Imagine a minister with an excitement equal to that of preaching one day in the week, extending itself over

six, and that not for three hours of the day, but for twice that number. How long would he live under it? But this the zealous teacher does; and if he does not have his nervous system strung to the highest tension, and his whole action glowing with unabated fire, he is, forsooth, *sluggish*, *indifferent*, and worse than both, that stinging word, *moderate*.

We have been convinced by a short but satisfactory experience, that consuming zeal in the school-room, is a most unsafe agent for the teacher to employ. We have been theoretically convinced of this, we would say; though how speedily we may be able to take advantage practically of this truth, remains to be tested. It is so agreeable to the American teacher to see the motion of the rail train, and the electric telegraph imitated on the highway of education; it is so consonant with the American rapidity of accomplishing everything, to hear the quiet drawl of the old fashioned school superseded by the tingling snap of modern method, that our Massachusetts teachers must be permeated by a strong principle, if by any, whose tendency shall be to draw them from the path of those who make a shortened life the price of their ambition.

It was but a few days since that we were conversing with an eminent teacher of the State, when he in a quiet way mentioned some plan for mitigating the labor of the school-room, and did it in such a manner as to convey the impression that he was looking forward to a serene old age. What! thought we, can it be possible that any teacher takes thought upon such an unworthy subject as how long he may prolong his days? Strange to say, the thing had never occurred to us before. The excitement of the school-room had seemed to us as absolutely precluding the thought of long life, and not only had we never speculated upon the probability of arriving at the threescore years or the possibility of the threescore and ten, but we had even considered forty as a limit of considerable uncertainty. The teacher to whom we refer will read these words; and to him we would give our public thanks for suggesting what may be new to other teachers than ourselves, that we are to take some thought for the morrow, in this respect at least.

Now if it be wrong to squander our lives as many teachers do,—and we are sorry that the professional teachers of Boston are by no means to be excluded from the number,—if it be wrong to entertain feelings which every earnest young teacher without doubt harbors, and which, if expressed, would be this—“I will gladly give my life to promote my scholars’ good;” if it be wrong to forget that we are entitled to a calm old age, a peaceful descent from active life to the grave, then it becomes us to see how we may rise to the same height to which consuming zeal would carry us, and yet retain our health, our quiet and our happiness. Zeal

will secure a teacher influence and repute, if it be seconded by even a moderate share of learning and prudence ; it may and almost certainly must, if allowed to run into the frenzied excitement of some school-rooms, send the teacher to an early and soon forgotten grave.

Our profession must not be stationary ; it must be progressive. And if we consult for our own comfort, and come to the conclusion that we overtask and make martyrs of ourselves to no good purpose ; if we at length determine that we will do so no longer, but will claim for ourselves what we would readily grant to others, the blessing of a protracted life, then it becomes us to devise some method to still sustain our influence, to enlarge our power, and still to point onward to success. And that method must be to go forward in our mental cultivation. We say mental cultivation purposely ; the teachers of Massachusetts are deservedly far better known for their morality than for their intelligence. They cannot well help being moral ; they are, if we may speak freely, exposed to no temptation. But how little real mental cultivation is there among us. We read the papers, it may be ; we peruse with intense eagerness the great works of fiction ;—we say great, because we have too much confidence in the intellect of the Massachusetts teachers to suppose that they honor the trashy novels of the day with their perusal ;—we take some slight interest in the scientific discoveries of the time : but we do not study ; we do not toil with our brains ; we do not educate ourselves, though we are the educators of others. We stop just where we were when we left school or left college, and then complain that our profession does not stand second only to the clerical.

But one teacher may say, "I work so hard in school, that I have no energy left to enter upon such additional toil as you would impose." To such we would say, Squander less energy in the school-room, and increase your scholarship. The great reason why teachers are so fearful of committees is because the latter stand in no awe of the attainments of the former. Let our teachers become learned men, and they need have no fear that unless they tax their energies to the severest exertion the "report" will dispose of them with but a word of qualified praise, or with many of unqualified censure. Our teachers are not wise in that they know these things not. The really able teacher is not always the one who drives the work of his school-room, as a steam-engine drives one of Hoe's fast presses ; but the one who, being "apt to teach," has the most principle, the most manliness, and the highest attainments. Let our Massachusetts teachers realize this ; let them feel that they must educate themselves while they educate others ; let them be the scholars of the State, equally distinguished for their piety and for their attainments, and we will venture to predict for the profession, honor,

love, a ready granting of all the auxiliaries which may make the life of the teacher less burdensome, and a speedy withdrawal of all those exactions upon our nervous energy which neither committees, parents, nor children are entitled to demand, and to which we yield only with the sacrifice of our manliness.

SCHOOL READERS.

THE race of school Readers is becoming extinct, and if there be any one thing for which the friend of thorough scholarship may be thankful, it is for this. Patchwork knowledge has not only been the order of the day, but the order of the years. From the Columbian Orator and English Reader to the First Class Book,—from the times of our grandfathers to those of our children, the harvests of superficial knowledge have been immense, and we gladly turn to any plan which shall fill the mental granaries with more substantial though less bulky and less showy results. To root out the evil we conceive to be the great mission of High Schools; and in the contest now waging between them and the Academies, we are almost constrained to toss up our cap and hail with a shout the return of systematic scholarship and a mental growth untrammelled by superficiality.

Which is the best field for discipline, an Ohio Academy where Phrenics, Chronics, Theotics, Epistatics, Geotics, Technics, and Cosmics receive an equal share of attention, or an unassuming Massachusetts High School, with its simple Mathematics, and no display even of that? Give me a school where every scholar can explain the entire theory of Vulgar Fractions and of the Division of Decimals; can elucidate by common sense or algebraic proof every rule in Arithmetic, from Interest to Banking; can read well a hundred lines taken at random from *Paradise Lost*; explain the grammatical construction, the allusions to ancient mythology and ancient geography; can give the derivation of the most prominent words, and the meaning of all; who manifest perfect familiarity with Plane Geometry,—and I ask not for Phoronomy or Graphics, Hylology or Polemics. *These*, as they are commonly pursued, promote not mental growth but mental dissipation. They no more satisfy the demands of a healthy expanding intellect, than titbits from a French cook can subdue the appetite of a voracious Yankee farmer.

Now school Readers, as our generation and as the few generations past know the term, deserve to be classed in the same category with these unsuitable studies for schools, and to be as heartily condemned. They do not furnish information, for no author has

time to fairly embark on his subject, before he is summarily dismissed ; they do not interest the scholar in eminent writers ; how can the young more than others be expected to be interested in men of whom they see so little ? And from the constant perusal of short pieces in the Reader, the pupil imbibes a relish for short paragraphs, and a distaste for any thing elaborate, admirably in keeping with the superficial tendency of the American nation.

The best thing that can be said in their behalf is that they afford variety of style, but it is a variety purchased at a fearful cost. Most persons get their knowledge and all their knowledge of English literature from their school Reader. But what would a classical scholar say of an acquaintance with Greek and Roman literature presented in a book like the Readers of the day ? Rather what would he not say ? What would be forcible enough to condemn it ?

The compendium of English Authors by Cleveland is a great step in advance of the old system. The pupil who may use this book under the guidance of a judicious teacher may lay it down at the close of his school days feeling that he knows something of English literature, and with some admiration of English genius. He has the materials to make the acquaintance of Milton and Shakspeare, Cowper and Goldsmith, limited though the acquaintance may be. And better is this by far than to lay aside the budget of patches which our school Readers are, and feel that the object gained is simply the mechanical execution of the art of Reading.

But even such a compendium as the one named is not the Ultima Thule in this direction. We must use the entire, un mutilated works of genius. Readers may suffice for the tyro, but for the scholar of awakened powers, we need a work which shall call forth his admiration, and give him an almost tangible feeling of sympathy with his author. For that reason I would place in his hands a tragedy of Shakspeare, the Deserted Village and Traveller of Goldsmith, an Oration of Webster, or, better than all for such purpose, the grand old Paradise Lost ; from these and others, I would select the one best adapted to my pupil's capacity, and then hope for large results. Expense is no obstacle in this matter. When copies of Milton can be purchased for two dollars a dozen, why should our scholars starve on the dribbets of our reading books ? Not all schemes of reform find it so easy to build up as to pull down. Not so with this ; and among the rational reforms of the present day, one is imperatively called for which shall give to our scholars, while engaged in the study of elegant literature, the feeling of satisfaction resulting from "something attempted, something done."

MANUALS FOR SCHOOLS.

ONE great source of perplexity to those concerned in the work of education at the present day is the multitude of new school-books that crowd the market. The trade, especially in this vicinity, is in a flourishing condition. No trifling part of its profits arises from the sale of books to supply our schools. It matters little whether the books are really wanted: a spirited advertisement, guarded by a long file of mercenaries in the form of testimonials, opens the way for an agent, and the agent brings the business successfully to a close.

Notwithstanding the great variety in the style and completeness of our text-books, practical teachers, if we may judge by their complaints, find it very difficult to get such as will suit their purpose. Trial after trial is made: the work which was ushered into the schools as the long sought masterpiece, after a short time is condemned, like its predecessors, to make way for the next publication. Is the fault in the books and their authors, or in the unreasonable requirements of teachers?

It is clear enough that too high expectations are often formed. No book can supersede the necessity of having a living teacher: nor can any one rely upon text-books alone to secure his scholars against wasting their time, and what is worse, spoiling their minds by loose, lazy habits of thought. Yet it is not strange that too much dependence is placed on books in teaching. We are confidently assured that this method or that will save nine tenths of the time: another will inject the young mind in a trice with all the sciences and half the arts in a sort of dilute solution: is it not then natural to be a little intoxicated with the hope of improvement, and a little spleeny when it fails?

Books are often thrown aside as worthless, because they have not given satisfaction when put into the hands of scholars for whom they were not intended. Mistakes of this kind often occur in country schools. Committees, learning that a text-book has been approved in city schools of a certain grade, adopt it, overlooking all distinctions, perhaps, indeed, half ignorant that any exist,—and then repent at leisure of their unlucky choice. Cheapness, too, has something to do with the matter.

If the question were put to the teachers of this Commonwealth, *What excellences should a faultless school-book possess?* a majority of them would be more sorely puzzled to answer it than they are disappointed in their search for such a work. Among those who have a clearly defined theory of teaching,—and their number is not great,—there is much diversity of opinion. The question must first be settled, What is the best method of instructing the three classes into which the minds of our pupils naturally divide themselves, namely, those of average capacity, those above average, and those below?

Sound philosophy, to arrive at principles, crosses the field of facts. Whatever be the theories in regard to teaching, the practice may be observed; and it will present, in the schools of New England at least, substantially the same features. The custom is to put a book into the hands of the scholar, assign him a portion for study, and afterwards examine him in the text and the subject. His task is prefaced by no familiar introduction or commentary; he is expected to vindicate his claim to a future place among independent republicans, by mastering, unaided and alone, the lesson assigned to him. The system is emphatically one of recitations. The method of teaching by lectures, or by familiar discussion between teacher and learner, followed by recitations from a syllabus, though it is said to have been used with success in many of the German schools, is among us little understood and seldom practised. Instead of being taught by his instructor how to study, the scholar is left to learn, by disheartening experience, perhaps too late, this lesson, the first and most important of all. He is made to feel the necessity of preparing his recitation; to secure that end, he learns it, not easily by his understanding, but *by heart*. In this way, the minds of multitudes of scholars become little more than mere memories. Rightly enough, the ancients made Mnemosyne the mother of the Muses. Memory is indeed the parent of thought, beyond simple perception, and all its wonderful productions. But memory is not to be exercised or developed alone; besides, it is best improved by cases where facts play a prominent part, as in History, by quickening the imagination, and where laws and deductions from them predominate, as in Mechanics or Mathematics, by disciplining the reflective faculties. Histories, therefore, which are inordinately condensed, become mere jumbles of pictures, serving only to oppress the imagination and enfeeble memory. And in general, books which give simply laws and results, however elaborate their arrangement, are seldom satisfactory to the learner.

Many of our best mathematicians have in this way proved singularly unsuccessful in preparing elementary works. Instead of following the order of discovery, or the natural course of investigation, they give a rigid synthesis of the science, beautiful indeed to the proficient, but dry and perplexing enough to the student.

Elementary books should abound in illustration. Most of the difficulty lies in gaining the proper ideas,—very little in retaining them. Copious illustration does not consist in the repetition of a single one, as the using of fifty examples to illustrate a rule in arithmetic; but in applying the abstraction to a variety of cases, interesting, if possible, and clearly different from each other. For instance: suppose the definition of an ellipse has

been given, and also its equation. The mind comprehends fairly both the definition and the demonstration. If nothing more is done, a short time will suffice with most scholars to remove the impression; leaving only a blur where there should be a clear picture. But let it be added that an ellipse is a section of a cone; that a horizontal beam supported at its extremities, and having a uniform width, is equally strong throughout its whole length, if its vertical section is an ellipse; that this is the curve of the planetary orbits; and besides the other knowledge gained, there will be given so many new guaranties to the faithfulness of memory in retaining the main truths. Such illustrations, however, ought not to encumber the text. This ought to be concise. They may take the form of notes at the end of the work; or better, that of a running commentary on each page.

Serious complaints have been made against the mathematical books used in some of our colleges. Out of every class a few of more than ordinary mathematical capacity, bridge the chasms in the demonstrations; but the majority need more illustration, and an analytical arrangement rather than synthetical. Some of the French works exhibit the natural progression of ideas very perfectly. It is worth while to notice that these are the books which Professors chiefly recommend to their students, and from which many of our own treatises are scarcely more than lifeless abridgments.

The same considerations apply not only to the mathematics, but to all abstract sciences, to grammar especially. Half the school-books on this subject are full of crabbed rules, everything else being left to the teacher, and the other half so overcharged with examples and repetitions, that the laws of the language ought to be put in an appendix to enable the scholar to make their acquaintance.

English grammar suffers most. The grammar of the classical languages, with their multitude of inflections and therefore complex syntax, is taken as the standard, to which the English must somehow conform. Our language has lost nearly all its inflections. Consequently its syntax should be very simple. What in the classical tongues is expressed by inflections, the whole tribe of particles, interrogative, contingent, indefinite, and the like, is expressed with us by auxiliary words, or by a particular arrangement. To explain the traces of inflection that remain, the shortest and indeed the only proper way is to recur at once to the original language. A dozen lessons in any respectable Anglo-Saxon Grammar will give a class of scholars, if of the proper age for the study of grammar, a better knowledge of English etymology than most of them get in their whole course in the ordinary way. It is proper to observe here, that no teacher, at least of a High School or Grammar School, ought to rest till

he can read the Anglo-Saxon language with tolerable facility. At present, our school grammars are dealing principally with the logic of language. Its history, dialects, capacities and tendencies are left out of consideration. The common notion that he who condenses his matter into the smallest possible space, produces the best school-book, checks every attempt to amplify.

These suggestions are made not as an answer to the question mentioned above, but with the hope that teachers will contribute to settle it definitely from their observation of the wants of their scholars. When we can have a set of school-books suited to all the different classes of learners without depending upon advertisements in the newspapers, teachers will be spared much vexation, and the public a deal of expense.

J. K. B.

VERBATIM RECITATIONS.

THE experience of the past few months has greatly influenced us in favor of verbatim recitations. They have been pursued, we know, with hue and cry; exact quotations from memory of the words of the text-book have been stigmatized as the utter extinction of the pupil's individuality; as tending to repress thought and to produce servile dependence upon the views of others. It is said, the world has been too long ruled by that tyrannous word, Authority; that now the time has come for the mind to assert its individual supremacy. But let us have a care; there are many things true and good already discovered in the range of morals, in the range of thought, as well as in that of pure science, and those we, and those our children, may learn from ages and from men who knew nothing of California gold, but who knew much of the gold of a mental placer.

But we must deny, besides, that the rigid study of the words which authors use, the committing to memory of their phrases as well as of their ideas, has a tendency to produce parrot minds, unfledged intellects. History and biography will not prove it. Look at the lives of the eminent scholars of England, and you will find that there the deepest thinkers as well as the most ready writers are the men who committed most to memory in their youth. It was much of it dry, grammatical detail, but it was also to a great extent the unctuous verses of Homer and of Horace, lines which keep the mind in running order through life. The soul, like the body, grows by what it feeds on; food hastily swallowed, does but half its work; knowledge gulped down, not half.

If scholars commit to memory pages of history, geometry or logic, and the teacher do not discover till too late that they are but partially understood, let him not deride the memorizing method, but despise himself for his want of acumen. Let the teacher be a penetrating, thorough man, and he will not be ignorant whether the knowledge of his pupils is from the tongue or from the brain.

The grand reason why we favor verbatim recitations is because they beget a habit of thoroughness which will bear the test of life. The school-room is not eminently the place where knowledge is acquired, but it is the place where habits are secured. A zealous man will gain more by the careful use of the evenings of a twelvemonth than a school-boy will attain in five years' study; a man who learned at school how to devote his mind to intellectual tasks will acquire the five years' results in the evenings of a single winter. The knowledge which is got at school is not, generally speaking, the working knowledge which the handicrafts require, but the habit of using the mind is what is needed every day, and in every walk in life. Many men there are unable to analyze a sentence, or even to define the parts of speech, who yet speak admirable English; many a man of high standing in the community would stand aghast, compelled to solve an example in Complex Fractions; many men worth their thousands cannot tell whether Matanzas is in the East or the West Indies.

We would not insist, that to the rising generation of New England, a knowledge of the history of Sweden is as important as that of our own country, or that our children should be expected to be as familiar with the details of the life of Julius Cæsar, as with those of the life of Washington, but we do earnestly remonstrate against the practice, so common, so universal in our schools, of *getting a "general idea"* of many widely different things. "Getting an idea" of history, of grammar, of moral philosophy, yea, of theology, is the bane of American scholarship, and of American piety. The roots of the evil strike in our common schools. Instructors of youth, out with them. Let them no longer retard our country's prosperity. Let the future thorough scholarship of our nation commence in our schools. Dr. Walker, in the admirable address delivered at his inauguration as President of Harvard College, argues that the schools are throwing and must throw the colleges up upon higher ground than they have ever before held. The work is begun. The schools must carry it on. And we hold that there are no more effective means of securing thoroughness among pupils, than by demanding an exact adherence to the words of men who use better words than school-boys, to the thoughts of men who think deeper and clearer than school-girls, and who know better what ought to be learned than any who have not grasped the great

central truth, that all this study of antiquated lore, of dead language, of distasteful formulas, is to shape the mind, and not alone confer knowledge; to give habits as well as accomplishments, to train up and send forth men of power.

THE ARNOLD SYSTEM.

MANY of the readers of the Teacher give instruction in the Latin language; some, perhaps, according to the Arnold system, which is a higher Ollendorf method, with more sensible, or at any rate, with less colloquial examples for practice. It is singular that while the system of Ollendorf, with its various modifications, has become thoroughly popular among us, the kindred system of Arnold is so little known and so slightly prized. The fault does not lie in us, however; there is an intrinsic error in the system. The method in question may give us perfect colloquial fluency; but it never assures a deep and thorough knowledge of any language in its unity; here lies its deficiency. We have not forgotten the scourging which the author of "Teaching a science, and the Teacher an artist" has administered to it with the lash of his stinging satire; nor his eloquent exposition of the patchwork knowledge which it gives when completely carried out. Nor was his severity undeserved.

The great fault in the Arnold system, as all who have employed it must have observed, is the fragmentary character of the principles presented. The verb is not taught with any approximation to an embodiment of its unity. It ought not to be learned at once, with its diverse roots, and variety of termination, yet it is not rational to offer on one page a third person singular, and a dozen or more pages on, a second person plural of the same tense. Yet with such fragments the rudimentary books of this series are filled. Such a thing as a paradigm is not known to the learner till he has arrived at such a portion of the work that he needs them not. Next in magnitude to this evil, is the crude state of the rules and observations. They seem oftentimes to be worded in the most uncouth or unintelligible phrase that could be devised.

But while all of the First Latin Book and the First Greek Book is faulty, with the exception of the examples for illustration with their accompanying vocabularies, these are certainly admirable. I know of no better intellectual exercise for a young scholar, more adapted to give close habits of concentration, persevering search for principles, and watchful observation, than the study of the exercises in Harkness's Arnold. The old edition by Spencer is very faulty. The steps from principle to principle

are often too long to be taken by the young mind, and there is a manifest lack of examples for illustration. The edition by Harkness has, we are glad to see, almost entirely superseded it in this state.

The true way in which this method of which we speak should be made use of is, to allow Arnold's books to work hand in hand with the Latin or Greek Grammar. The exercise of changing English to Latin should not be lost to the learner, nor should he, at the same time, be compelled to commit to memory the barbarous rules to be found on every page of the Arnold text-books. The young student should commence the study with his Andrews and Stoddard in one hand, and his Arnold in the other; every rule should be learned from the former, every illustration drawn from the latter. Let the Arnold be studied from beginning to end; let the grammar be culled of its rules and its paradigms, here a rule, there an observation, here the declension of a noun, there the synopsis of a verbal root, here from etymology, there from syntax, and again, from prosody, if need be. Let the learner's progress in the language be like the slow but thorough erection of a building: as the work rises and proceeds towards completion, wood is drawn from the pile of lumber, mortar is brought from its bed, bricks and stone are laboriously carried to their place, all giving strength and durability; so in the equally solid superstructure of language, let the rules and paradigms be brought in when they are needed and where they are needed, a complete rule and not a part, a complete declension and not a single case, a complete tense and not a third person singular, as Arnold does. Most young persons become disheartened by the first few months' study of Latin and Greek; and no wonder; the application of what they learn lies all in the future; there is nothing to relieve the present drudgery. But by this system, *properly used*, the rules can be applied as soon as they are learned, or rather, they can be learned as soon as they are applied; the scholar, like the house carpenter, sees the value of each block, which has its appropriate place in the general framework.

We are aware that in an article which has interest but to a minority of the readers of the Teacher, we must be brief. Did our limits permit we should be glad to expand the general plan which we have merely indicated above, and to open a short chapter of experience. We would merely say in closing, that for the purposes for which the ancient languages should be studied, to give mental acumen, to give the power of looking after and grasping many things at once, which forms the grand distinction between a capable and an inefficient man, to promote quickness of thought, and, subordinated to all these intellectual gains, to foster a constantly careful habit, we deem the rudimentary text books of Mr. Arnold better than Algebra or Logic, Geometry or Physics, Rhetoric or Botany.

PRESS ON !

BROTHER, do cares and perplexities lower ?

Press on !

Ne'er yield to Despair, even one golden hour ;

Press on !

Press on, falter not ! let thy heart never fail ;

Though troubles may throng thee and doubts may assail,

The high, noble Purpose shall ever prevail :

Press on !

Sister, the seed that thou sowest, dies not ;

Press on !

Rich shall be the reward, though toilsome thy lot :

Press on !

What in childhood is sown, in youth's season will spring,

In manhood its fruit to maturity bring :

Embrace not Despair, but to Hope ever cling :

Press on !

The battle of life must be earnestly fought ;

Press on !

Flag not nor falter in action or thought ;

Press on !

Though thy zeal and thy triumph by bards be unsung,

And thy name on Fame's trumpet not loudly be rung,

Yet thy words shall reëcho distant ages among :

Press on !

TEACHING APPLIED TO THE NATURAL SCIENCES.

EVERY practical teacher in our higher English Seminaries has experienced the difficulty of conveying to his pupils a clearly defined and reliable knowledge of the natural sciences. The difficulty seems not to reside so much in the abstruseness of the topics themselves, as in the proper methods to be employed in bringing them before the scholar's mind. Each teacher has his favorite system of instruction, and regards all others as useless and inefficient. In some institutions the pupils are taught to witness with gaping astonishment the performance of certain brilliant experiments, calculated, if properly introduced, to illustrate great principles ; while in other establishments, less fortunate in the possession of apparatus, the dry details of the text-book are to be committed to the reluctant memory. In the former case, the dignity of a science is of course wholly lost ; the school

room becomes an exhibition of toys, and the advantage of the study is dependent, in the scholar's mind, altogether upon the success of the experiment before him. In the latter case, where visual experience is totally discarded, the cumbersome mass of minutiae soon becomes onerous; disgust is awakened, and this before long gives place to negligence. The great desideratum is this;—some means by which the science to be studied shall first commend itself to the favorable consideration of the student, both as an important branch of mental culture, and as affording information of utility in every-day life. We have afterwards to adopt some method by which the principles of the science shall be carefully investigated and acquired, and as we progress, some mode of experimental illustration, which shall confirm the principles involved, rather than amuse the sense.

The interest which we all attach to a beautiful experiment can as well be of that kind which recognizes a reason and an adaptation, as of that which is objectless and ill-defined. And it is one of the most important duties in the teacher's life to discipline the pupil's mind to an exalted standard in this respect.

With the design of making the study of the sciences, and particularly Chemistry, as useful and entertaining as possible to a class of young ladies, we adopted the following plan of study about a year since, and have found it far more successful than any other which we have seen employed. It awakens, and at the same time satisfies the most ardent thirst for scientific knowledge, and throws the greatest interest around the study. Its chief advantage, however, is the habit of original investigation thus necessarily acquired.

The scholars are first led by conversation to feel an interest in the subject, to free their minds from false prejudices, and see the almost innumerable applications of Chemistry every where around them. Their curiosity is thus awakened, and we may excite that curiosity as far as we judge best. Our class is thus prepared to commence with vigor the study itself, feeling that they have much to learn, and that much study on their part is demanded. The first principles of the science, the theoretical or philosophical portions of the subject are then taught by familiar lectures, and every means of illustration which the laboratory or nature can readily furnish is employed. Each young lady is obliged to take notes of the principal statements and the illustrations, and at the commencement of the subsequent lecture, a rigid examination of the class is held upon the last; and this examination invariably indicates great previous attention and a careful consultation of the various works of reference. In the progress of the study the different chemical substances come before us, and a similar course is pursued, designed to favor, as far as may be, original investigation and self-dependence.

A tabular diagram is placed before the class, embracing the order in which each subject is to be treated. Any member is called upon to commence with some given substance, and the various required particulars are given by others as their names are mentioned. Each point is illustrated as the recitation proceeds. Thus with a table before us containing such a list as this,

1. Name ;
2. Discovery, and Natural History ;
3. Specific Gravity ;
4. Physical properties ;
5. Chemical properties ;
6. Method of obtaining ;
7. Theory of the process ;
8. Relations ;
9. Experiments ;

a very accurate description can be obtained. Great attention on the part of the class is awakened. A very extensive review may be made in a short time, a healthy excitement is thrown into the recitation, and we are convinced that apart from the novelty of the method, greater promptness in description, a greater certainty in remembering, and a clearer understanding of the subject can thus be obtained, than by any method which is not topical in its character.

N. E. G.

TRENCH ON THE STUDY OF WORDS.

THIS is a work of which no teacher should be destitute, who wishes to inform himself with regard to the curious derivations of the most familiar words, who desires to obtain broad views of the nature and functions of language, who is anxious to acquaint himself with the philological discussions of the learned world with regard to the origin of speech and the character of early dialects, who aims at obtaining a luminous exposition of the claims of the new sciences of phonography and phonotopy and an earnest yet candid refutation of those claims, who is pleased with a manly and nervous style, and a most polished diction. It is not a massive, but a most comprehensive work. It has been introduced into a few schools, and is admirably adapted to form the taste and cultivate the minds of scholars of sufficient maturity to appreciate its beauties. As a stepping stone from the studies which comprise ungeneralized facts to those which involve continuous reasoning and speculation, as, for instance, from Geography to Logic, it is unequalled. Let every teacher possess it.

MY FIRST TERM.

CAN any reader of the Massachusetts Teacher review his first term's experience without a smile,—nay, without a good, broad, refreshing laugh at some droll upturning of things or persons which took place during that momentous period of the pedagogal existence? For the honor of Momus, I hope not. Warren Burton has told us many things which drive off the sad care and which awaken the old boyish feel, and has drawn pictures which stand out in the boldest and yet the most pleasing relief. But there are hundreds of queer schoolmasters whose portraits have never been drawn, and hundreds upon hundreds of school anecdotes which have faded from memory, which can never be recalled, but which could each provoke the genial smile and stir the sluggish blood.

There are certain elements of the natural character which have a bearing on the first term of the young man or the young woman who at an immature age undertakes the task of instilling Arithmetic and Grammar, Geography and History into undeveloped minds. There is to all the same overpowering sense of responsibility which arises solely from the conviction of incompetency; the same sudden accession of dignity which one feels sits so ungracefully; the same realization of power which prompts the question which your whole demeanor betrays, "What would the world do without me?"

These things render the dawning experience of teachers uniform, unmodified save by the varieties of pupils and the diversities of situation. As country school houses are alike in color and shape and size, so we are tempted to say did the first term of each of my readers accord with that of every other in its main characteristics. What belongs to one in this matter, belongs to all; and it is because this first term is of such common interest, that I shall venture to recall a few circumstances attending my own novitiate in the art of teaching.

What folly it was then and is now to employ a sage of eighteen or nineteen to take charge of thirty rude boys and romping girls, because he can be hired for twenty-eight dollars a month. I fancied I was discreet, and profound, and imposing, with my tall hat, and high heels, and gigantesque dicky. I could talk of the Greek digamma, and conjugate Latin verbs, and demonstrate Euclid; had a perfect acquaintance with the best writers on the mind, but no more skill in tracing or directing the play of a child's feelings, than Patrick Henry had in legislating on matters of finance.

On the second day of the school, the prudential committee came in,—a rough farmer, the soles of his boots more than half an inch thick, his pants retaining enough of the original material

for you to venture a shrewd guess what it was, his frock soiled and torn, and his hat more than half-way to the city of Destruction. His whole appearance would perhaps equal in respectability a first class city wood-sawyer.

I had never met him before, and of course could not be expected to recognize him in his official capacity. Among other civil questions proposed, therefore, there was of course this: "Do you live in the district, sir?" "Yes sir, I live here," was the reply, made in a tone which made me feel that there was a mistake somewhere. "Perhaps you have children in the school?" "No, sir, I have no children in the school." "I shall be glad to find an interest in the school among parents who have no children in it." This remark, which was made, I must confess, for the sake of saying something, was met with a simple and cold "Yes, sir." Then, and not till then, did the thought flash upon my mind that it might be the prudential committee of the district with whom I was holding such ungracious communion. Thus was mistake No. 1 made, and mistake No. 2 followed immediately. Instead of making a single, and a simple, and a short word of apology, I stultified myself by a profuse expenditure of monosyllables, dissyllables and polysyllables, which so far from atoning for my offence but made the matter tenfold worse. The boorish committee-man was not satisfied; the pliant teacher was mortified and perplexed. The lesson to be drawn from the whole affair was, that an attempt to conciliate a rough New England farmer by the forms of politeness could hardly be successful, and that a spirit of manly independence would be more acceptable even though our farmer be clothed with the "little brief authority" of a prudential committee.

In a week or two this lesson, speaking in the manner of pedagogues, had to be recited. The classes had got well under way and were scudding along under a strong breeze. The examining committee, that dread trio of the minister, the doctor, and the leading politician, announced themselves one fine afternoon, without special request, and entered upon their inquisitorial duties. After the preliminary exercise in reading, in which they offered no "suggestions," the geography was brought upon the carpet. For the few days before I had given a half hour each day to the geography of the West India Islands, and in the form of a familiar conversation, I had spoken of the climate, the soil, the productions, the natural curiosities, the principal places, forms of government, character of the inhabitants, and whatever else I could impart about them, conveying the utile dissolved in the dulci, and questioning the class rigidly each day, with reference to the lesson of the preceding. The plan was adapted to the character of the school, and worked admirably. Putting a few general questions to the class, they were answered promptly,

when the minister snuffing a departure from the manner of auld lang syne, remarked in his blandest tone, "You teach Smith's Geography in your school, do you not, sir?" "I teach *Geography*, not *Smith's Geography*, sir," was modestly but firmly replied, and to my great joy was received in the right manner, seconded as the answer was by the promptness of the class. There was no further interference with my methods of teaching during the term; and I believe that with any committee, however bigoted, however wedded to old notions, and opposed to change, an unyielding demand on the part of the really competent teacher to have his claims to a knowledge of his profession recognized, can be in all cases sustained, if ventured upon in a firm but modest manner.

Youth must be the most really Christian season of life: how is it that the young are such ready converts to the doctrines of moral suasion unless it be because, having more native goodness of heart, they are willing to suppose that others are endowed with the same great gift? I was not exempt from the common dreaminess which makes cherubs of rough farm boys and farm girls, and which would always entice them to duty with the honeyed words of a persuasion which they cannot feel yet with its full force; a dreaminess which would debar them from hearing the stern tone of reprimand, which would deprive them of the discipline which the enforcement of law by penalty can afford; in one word, I was an admirer of moral suasion. Blind infatuation, unfortunate delusion! The second week, I was compelled to explain the nature of a right angle, in informing the scholars that on the morrow I should turn a sharp corner in the management of affairs. Let no young teacher, who may have all the confidence in the morality of almost untried pupils that the recorder of this chapter of errors had, ever be led into a disclosure of his confidence in moral suasion on the first day of the term, before pupils one or two years his superiors in age. The reversing of the process, which must come in a few days, will make sad havoc, will redden many an eye, and cause many a palm to tingle.

One week and four days formed my career on the moral suasion principle; on the fifth day of the second week, on the day when the nature of a right angle was explained, and its connection with school affairs was made apparent, half of the school were made to feel the weight of the ferule. A teacher, by working with continued hope and zeal may pass from the ruling by the infliction of physical pain to ruling by drawing forth love; to be able to govern by moral suasion, is one of the great prizes to be sought in our profession. The teacher who begins with attempting it, either is egregiously deceived in himself, or

succeeds by reason of having far more strength, intellectually, and influence morally, than most youths of nineteen can lay claim to.

But no one can be making errors always; the greatest blunders in theology, politics, or general science, occasionally get a glimpse of truth, and deserve credit for it. In this trying apprenticeship to the grand trade of teaching, I was gaining wisdom, though from painful experiences. In the third week, I took a lesson on the subject of energy and promptness in managing the affairs of the school-room. This was the illustration of the lesson. A youth two years nearer manhood than myself, had brought a pack of cards to the school for obvious purposes. I took them from him and quietly threw them into the fire, and punished him besides. (My delusion with regard to corporal punishment took flight a week before.) The school-house being built in that approved style for which backwoods school-houses are so famous, was unprovided with a lock to the teacher's desk. On opening the drawer in the afternoon, of course my amazement was not great to find the ruler missing. No teacher with scholars who once or twice a year go to the ballot-box need be surprised to have his ferule become firewood. And so it was plain that the ruler was burnt. If there had been any doubt as to the offender in this case, the eyes of the school resting involuntarily upon the culprit of the morning, would have removed it. He doubtless felt secure. No exasperated summer school-mistress could now send out for a green twig from a neighboring orchard; it was dead winter. To turn him from school would be to give him honor in the face of all those other dignitaries, the large boys in the other town schools, to make a martyr of him in the cause of manly resistance to a master's tyranny. Prompt action was necessary, and it was well for the future comfort of the school that in the teacher, a prompt actor was on the spot. A slate of the largest size was lying on the front row of desks. I took it in my hand, struck it over my bent knee, much to the peril of my knee-pan, and shattered it to fragments. Then tearing the sides apart, and placing the two largest ones together, I had an instrument ready for active service. Going up to him, I took his hand without resistance, and punished him severely. The whole transaction occupied much less time than I have taken in describing it. And the rapidity of the whole movement was so great and the demonstration so unexpected, that the effect lasted for the rest of the term. A more docile boy than he was after this, I have never seen in school.

There is a good deal of archness among school-girls, and it is not unknown to all the readers of the Teacher, that it has in some instances entered into the heart of some indiscreet damsel to entrap the "master" into a pit of trouble from which he could

only escape with an affection of the heart. It is of course entirely unknown to the reader, but it is a fact that the writer is, and has been for many years, oppressed by the painful consciousness that he is to be classed among those unfortunate men whom Homer calls "of ugly countenance." Be it understood too, by the reader, that this consciousness, strange to say, had been forced upon him previous to the time when the events of this chapter occurred. Great was my wonder, therefore, when I saw myself either gaining in interest in the eyes of a young lady some two years my elder, or destined to become the prey of a coquette who would laugh to scorn my ugliness. Now either because my heart was secured in another direction, (the ugliest men have oftentimes a very large heart,) or because of natural unimpressibility or stolidity, I was in no danger of becoming a victim. In no sense was the affection "reciprocal."

The school was planning to take a quiet excursion by carriage to a neighboring pond, and of course the teacher was the first invited. I had no thought of not going with my school, till it was reported to me that Miss Sophonisba, if that were her name, had declined two or three very excellent invitations for the pleasure of her company. Thus it was apparent which way the cat was jumping. Pretty soon came the distinct tone of a rumor that she was waiting for an invitation from the teacher, and next that she had expressed herself to that effect. I was reminded of the anecdote of the English cook who objected to being married in a certain style of bonnet, because "what would the whole world say?" That same infatuation, or something very akin to it, seemed to possess the amiable Sophonisba. So to bring the delusion to a termination at a blow, I ordered my horse and chaise in good season, but made no announcement of my plans with regard to dividing my happiness with any fair maid who called me friend as well as teacher, till the morning of the proposed ride. Meanwhile the situation of Miss Sophonisba was certainly not growing in interest, and on the evening before the day of rejoicing her words had made much town talk, which to an ugly man is exceedingly distasteful. On the morning in question I pounced upon a full-grown *boy* for my companion, and was content to endure his stupid commonplaces during the day for the sake of the excellent disposal it made of rather an aggravating matter. Miss Sophonisba was fain to retract some of her late denials, and like Shylock in the play, if she could not have the pound of flesh, to have the best which was left. Poor girl! fate seemed adverse; the young men had looked elsewhere, and were now in a state of contentment, with companions who were satisfied with the first asking; and, she poor lady, of the mature age of twenty and one, was obliged to travel in a large open wagon, taking upon herself the

responsible charge of promoting the happiness of sundry little girls, not old enough to have the satisfaction of being attended by even one beau for the company. I will not say that I did not enjoy myself that day, to the hardness of my heart be it spoken.

There are a hundred such things which it would do me good to write, and I hope would not harm the reader to hear. But I forbear. Most of the teachers of Massachusetts forget that to the Teacher any articles are acceptable; I will not forget that short ones are doubly so.

A WORD ON EDUCATION.

IN the present state of society, when schools are so common, and education is so much talked about, there are too many who notwithstanding the years which they have spent at school, have only a superficial knowledge of the most *common* branches of education; for while they have *studied* nearly every thing, they have thoroughly learned comparatively nothing.

To meet the wants of these superficial scholars, in almost every State fashionable seminaries are established, which resemble a variety store, where one can buy everything, from a penny-whistle to a spy-glass, or even a telescope; there, the pupils are taught everything, from Greek to the simplest kinds of embroidery, from geology to music: and thus being compelled to seek a variety, acquire only a little from one thing, and still less from another. Thus they come home with what *they* call a "finished education," and it were well if their literary attainments should be labelled, "This side up with care," for if any one a little wiser than they should attempt to question them, they would soon show the brittleness of the contents.

In this time of progress a young lady is considered as making no advancement in her education, unless she studies, at the same time, German and Italian, algebra and astronomy, singing and painting, dancing and drawing, composition and crotchet work, together with being able to execute well on the harp and piano; and as the consequence of this, there are now few thoroughly educated women, but many smatterers. They have so much to occupy their minds, that they forget almost always to-day what they learned yesterday; having undertaken too much, they lose as fast as they gain.

One who can spell and write his own language correctly, or who has entirely mastered one thing, whether mathematics or whatever else, has a more solid education, and will be more likely to succeed in life, than one who can jabber bad French, or

conjugate incorrectly, verbs in a dozen different languages, whether living or dead, and who consequently is not a proficient in his own tongue.

A scholar who has been brought up on a thorough system, knows what he is talking about when he talks; says what he intends to say; by it he has learned to discipline his mind; has obtained clear ideas, can write sensibly and correctly, and if, in any of the duties of after life, he is called upon to make a decision in any peculiar circumstances, he can think accurately, because his mind has already been trained in the right way; he holds the clue to a labyrinth of knowledge, and has the capacity to study properly. Such a one is easily distinguished from the imperfectly educated man, who, to use the words of Bolingbroke, "rattles on as meaninglessly as an alarm clock."

M. H. W.

THE MOTHER OF LORD BACON, AND AN ENGLISH LADY'S EDUCATION IN HER DAYS.

LADY BACON was doubtless a lady of high cultivated mind after the fashion of her age. But we must not suffer ourselves to be deluded into the belief, that she and her sisters were more accomplished women than many who are now living. On this subject there is, we think, much misapprehension. We have often heard men who wish, as almost all men of sense wish, that women should be highly educated, speak with rapture of the English ladies of the sixteenth century, and lament that they can find no modern damsel resembling those fair pupils of Ascham and Aylmer, who compared over their embroidery the styles of Isocrates and Lysias, and who, while the horns were sounding and the dogs in full cry, sat in the lonely oriel, with eyes riveted to that immortal page which tells how meekly and bravely the first great martyr of intellectual liberty took the cup from his weeping jailer. But surely these complaints have very little foundation. We would by no means disparage the ladies of the sixteenth century or their pursuits. But we conceive that those who extol them at the expense of the women of our time forget one very obvious and very important circumstance. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, and Edward the Sixth, a person who did not read Greek and Latin, could read nothing or next to nothing. The Italian was the only modern language which possessed anything that could be called a literature. All the valuable books then extant in all the vernacular dialects of Europe would hardly have filled a single shelf. It was therefore

absolutely necessary that a woman should be uneducated or classically educated. Indeed, without a knowledge of one of the ancient languages no person could then have any clear notions of what was passing in the political, the literary or the religious world. The Latin was in the sixteenth century all and more than all that the French was in the eighteenth. It was the language of courts as well as of the schools. It was the language of diplomacy; it was the language of theological and political controversy. Being a fixed language, while the living languages were in a state of fluctuation, being universally known to the learned and the polite, it was employed by almost every writer who aspired to a wide and durable reputation. A person who was ignorant of it was shut out from all acquaintance—not merely with Cicero and Virgil—not merely with heavy treatises on canon law and school divinity—but with the most interesting memoirs, state papers and pamphlets of his own time.

This is no longer the case. All political and religious controversy is now conducted in the modern languages. The ancient tongues are used only in comments on the ancient writers. The great productions of Athenian and Roman genius are indeed still what they were. But though their positive value is unchanged, their relative value, when compared with the whole mass of mental wealth possessed by mankind, has been constantly falling. They were the intellectual all of our ancestors. They are but a part of our treasures. Over what tragedy could Lady Jane Grey have wept, over what comedy could she have smiled, if the ancient dramatists had not been in her library? A modern reader can make shift without *Œdipus* and *Medea*, while he possesses *Othello* and *Hamlet*. We are guilty, we hope, of no irreverence towards those great nations to which the human taste owes art, science, taste, civil and intellectual freedom, when we say that the stock bequeathed by them to us has been so carefully improved that the accumulated interest now exceeds the principal. We believe that the books which have been written in the languages of Western Europe during the last two hundred and fifty years, are of greater value than all the books which at the beginning of that period were extant in the world. With the modern languages of Europe, English women are at least as well acquainted as English men. When, therefore, we compare the acquirements of Lady Jane Grey and those of an accomplished young woman of our time, we have no hesitation in awarding the superiority to the latter. We hope that our readers will pardon this digression. It is long; but it can hardly be called unreasonable, if it tends to convince them that they are mistaken in thinking that their great-great-grandmothers were superior women to their sisters and wives.

MACAULAY.

MATHEMATICAL.

WE have met the following questions in a book which is so rare that we think Massachusetts teachers would hardly recognize the name. They are performed by the rule of Compound Subtraction, and show, that where the number in the subtrahend is greater than that in the minuend, we are not obliged to borrow precisely 1 of the next higher denomination, but may borrow less or more than 1, as may be convenient. The problems are these :

From 1 mile, subtract 7 furlongs, 39 rods, 5 yards, 1 foot, 5 inches.

M.	Fur.	Rods.	Yds.	Ft.	In.
1	0	0	0	0	0
	7	39	5	1	5
<hr/>					
0	0	0	0	0	1

In this question, instead of borrowing 1 foot we borrow 1-2 a foot, or 6 inches, from which we take 5 inches, and 1 remains ; we then carry 1-2 to 1, and borrowing 1-2 a yard or 1 1-2 feet, we have 1 1-2 from 1 1-2 leaving nothing, and then proceed as usual.

	M.	Fur.	Rods.	Yds.	Ft.
From	55	0	0	0	0
Take	13	7	39	5	2
<hr/>					
	40	7	39	5	1

In this problem we subtract the feet as usual, and carry 1 to the yards, making 6, and after this we borrow 2 of each higher denomination.

In the same way

	Yrs.	Months.	Wks.	Days.	Hours.	Min.
From	14	0	0	0	0	0
Take	10	10	10	10	10	10
<hr/>						

borrowing 1, 2, 3 or more as may be needed at each subtraction. The teacher can form examples to the same effect, although perhaps not equal in ingenuity to the first presented. We would advise him to do so ; the thing is admirably adapted to interest an advanced class.

Resident Editors' Table.

GEORGE ALLEN, Jr.,...*Boston.* } RESIDENT EDITORS. { ELBRIDGE SMITH, *Cambridge.*
C. J. CAPEN,*Dedham.* } { E. S. STEARNS, ..*Framingham.*

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.

WE are unable to give to our readers a full programme of the meeting of the American Institute, to be held in Providence on the 8th, 9th and 10th of August.

We are permitted to say, however, that lectures will be delivered by Rev. E. B. Huntington, and Elbridge Smith, Esq.

The meeting will be held in the new Railroad Hall.

The First Session will commence on Tuesday at 10 o'clock. Dr. Wayland will deliver his address at 11 o'clock. The Institute will then adjourn to meet at 4 o'clock for a Social Gathering.

During the sessions there will be a debate on the general subject of "Teaching Arithmetic," and one on the subject of "Geography as a study for Schools,—the best methods of teaching it." The debates on these subjects will be opened by gentlemen especially chosen for the purpose by the Committee of Arrangements.

Arrangements have been made for the gratuitous accommodation of lady teachers attending the meeting from abroad. Arrangements will also be made for the reduction of the fare on the principal Railroads.

The Circular will appear in a few days, and will be published in the August number of this Journal.

NORFOLK COUNTY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

TWELFTH SEMIANNUAL SESSION.

Thursday Morning.

THE Association met on Thursday, May 25th, in Temperance Hall, Dedham, and was organized at half-past ten, A. M., D. B. Hagar, Esq., President, in the chair.

Prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. Lamson, of Dedham.

The Secretary's report of the last meeting was read and accepted.

At the suggestion of the President, a committee was appointed to ascertain what teachers were present from each town in the county.

At eleven o'clock, Richard Edwards, Esq., of Salem, lectured on "The Teaching of Geography." The lecturer remarked at

first upon the order of mental development, and showed how the power and habit of observation early appear as leading traits of the human mind. He then proved the absurdity of relying upon definitions to convey an idea of natural objects. Observation of the objects themselves can alone adequately do this. To give a scholar a knowledge of maps, he proposed to have him make a map of a well-known field, dividing it by lines like those of latitude and longitude. Afterwards, he should draw maps of countries, from a knowledge of the latitude and longitude of the prominent points. Embossed maps were recommended for conveying a knowledge of the elevation of places and other physical characteristics. The lecturer demonstrated very clearly how the study of geography on a proper system, is of great value in cultivating a truthful and pure imagination.

At the close of the lecture, the chair appointed a Nominating Committee as follows: Messrs. Richardson of Dedham; Dickerman of Stoughton; Long of Roxbury; and Daniells of Brookline.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Association assembled at 2 P. M., and the subject, "How do you teach Geography?" was first discussed by Mr. Dewing of Quincy, who said that in this branch of instruction, he simply requires his pupils to learn what the assigned lesson of the book contains; and when this is well done, he imparts in as interesting a manner as he can any additional information on the subject he possesses. Mr. Dewing closed his remarks by expressing a wish that others would, as he had done, answer this question with frankness, without attempting to entertain the Association with untried theories.

Mr. Long of W. Roxbury, asked to have a way pointed out for obviating the difficulties which attend "mapping from nature," the use of books of reference, and the employment of oral instruction. As evils attending these things, he mentioned waste of time, loss of attention, and aversion to hard study.

Mr. Edwards said he made oral instruction profitable by requiring it to be subsequently recited by the pupil as faithfully as if the book had conveyed the knowledge. He thought the difficulties of mapping from nature would soon vanish before a persevering effort. He also explained how to teach the profile mapping of countries.

Mr. Colburn of Providence would have scholars so study their maps, that they could readily draw an outline of any country from memory. Also showed his method of teaching the latitude and longitude of places, by tracing the most important parallels and meridians. Mr. Kneeland of Dorchester spoke of the disadvantages under which teachers labored when they

use text-books which a committee selects, and which are used for the examination of the school. If a teacher, laboring under such circumstances, should spend much time teaching without his text-book, he would in the annual report suffer in comparison with his brother and sister teachers.

The discussion was continued by Messrs. Rolfe and Snow of Dorchester, Willey of Braintree, and Gage of W. Roxbury.

At 4 o'clock, the subject of Decimal Fractions was taken up, and earnestly and minutely discussed by Messrs. Gage, Rolfe, Willey, Kneeland, Colburn, and Dodge of Jamaica Plain.

The Association then adjourned to half-past seven, P. M.

EVENING SESSION.

The evening hour was occupied by a lecture from Josiah A. Stearns, Esq., President of the State Teachers' Association, who took as his subject, The Common School. It would be useless to attempt giving an idea of this performance by a meagre abstract. The audience, by their fixed attention, showed that it was justly appreciated.

FRIDAY MORNING SESSION.

At nine o'clock, "The cultivation of a Literary Taste" was discussed by Messrs. Gage, Wheeler of Quincy, Kneeland, Ansorge of Germany, Hagar and Willey. This discussion was, by many, considered the best of the whole session, displaying no small degree of literary culture among the members of the Association.

At eleven o'clock, Mr. Wellington, of Quincy, read a very instructive lecture on "The true Principle of Teaching." The audience fully approved of his exposition of what should be every teacher's principles of action.

The annual election of officers succeeded the lecture, with the following result:—

President, D. B. Hagar, Esq., West Roxbury; *Vice Presidents*, Messrs. Wellington, of Quincy, Dodge of West Roxbury, and Boardman, of Canton; *Recording Secretary*, C. Slafter, Dédham; *Corresponding Secretary*, T. Metcalf, West Roxbury; *Treasurer*, I. Swan, Dorchester; *Counsellors*, Messrs. G. L. Weston, Roxbury, Dewing, Quincy, Willey, Braintree, and Dickerman, of Stoughton.

After a few closing remarks by the President upon the advantages which the ladies of the Association might confer by the use of the pen for the improvement of the meetings of the Society, it was unanimously

Voted, That the thanks of the Association are due to those gentlemen who have interested and instructed us by their lectures during the present session.

The meeting then adjourned *sine die*.

CARLOS SLAFTER, *Recording Secretary*.

INDEXES.

POOLE'S INDEX TO PERIODICAL LITERATURE.*

BARNARD'S INDEX TO EDUCATIONAL WORKS.

"Next to actual knowledge, the best thing is to know where to find it."—
LITERARY WORLD.

"No man," says Dr. Watts, "is obliged to learn and know everything." He ought perhaps to have said, "*School teachers excepted*, no man is required to learn and know everything." In many schools and communities, a teacher of youth is expected to be a living embodiment of a universal Encyclopædia; but unfortunately, very few copies of this edition have ever yet been issued, and most of us are still obliged to run the risk of losing caste by the frequent employment of the phrase, "do not know."

Few of us retain in the mind more than a small per centage of what we have at some period actually possessed; and much of that which we do retain, is so poorly classified and arranged, that when we wish to call it into use, it refuses to come at our bidding. It is true that these facts prove our minds to be but imperfectly disciplined; but when we reflect that there is not only a world of *books* to which we may have free access, in every department of knowledge, but that thousands and thousands of the choicest articles are also scattered through the almost illimitable fields of *periodical literature*, it is obvious that no one should attempt to store his mind with all the knowledge which it is yet highly important he should have at all times within his reach, and be able to call to his service at pleasure.

Here then is the great value of Mr. Poole's "Index to Periodical Literature." Whatever subject we may wish to investigate, we have only to open this Index, and we are referred directly to all the different articles that throw light upon it, in the whole range of leading Reviews and Magazines, for a period of half a century.

All our larger libraries have complete sets of such works as the North American Review, Edinburgh Review, Quarterly Review, Blackwood's Magazine, Silliman's Journal of Science, etc. It is no exaggeration to say of these works, that for all practical and useful purposes, their value is at least doubled by the appearance of the "Index to Periodical Literature." This remark is specially applicable to those Periodicals that are not accompanied by general Indexes to their contents. The oldest of our own Reviews, the North American, is an example of this class. No general Index to this work has been published since

* Index to Periodical Literature. By Wm. Fred. Poole, A. M. New York : Charles B. Norton.

1827; and the student who would learn the contents of the volumes that have appeared since that time, is obliged to search through more than fifty separate Indexes.

The Index of Mr. Poole bears everywhere the marks of uncommon thoroughness and accuracy. Every scholar in the country, who has the privilege of using it, will feel that he owes Mr. Poole a debt of gratitude, for his protracted and indefatigable labor in preparing so faithful a guide to the treasures of our scientific and literary periodicals.

Mr. Poole's work is the first effort of its class in this country. It is to be hoped that it will be followed by similar efforts in other departments of literature and science.

Every teacher must have felt the need of a guide to the various sources of information on subjects relating to the duties of his profession. We are happy to be able to state that the Hon. Henry Barnard, Superintendent of Schools for the State of Connecticut, has in preparation a work which will meet this want. It is to contain a catalogue of every accessible Book and Pamphlet relating to the history, organization, administration, instruction, and discipline of Common Schools, Academies, Colleges, and other Educational Institutions in the United States, with a brief synopsis of the contents of each, and a minute *Index* to every important topic discussed. When published it will furnish teachers with an amount of information respecting the sources of knowledge on educational subjects, which they could not otherwise gain without devoting months, and perhaps years to laborious research. We shall look with interest for its appearance.

The Germans are somewhat in advance of us in the preparation of General Indexes. In a recent number of Norton's Literary Gazette, we find the following, among other notices of German publications: "Koner's Index of Periodical Historical Literature from 1800 to 1850, has reached the conclusion of the second volume. Another Index to Geography and Travels, as contained in Periodicals, is announced as in preparation by the same author."

It is to be regretted that many of our prominent publishing houses do not more fully appreciate the importance of accompanying the works which they issue with carefully prepared Indexes to their contents. The two leading American Magazines at the present time, are furnished with exceedingly defective indexes. An attempt is made in each of the successive volumes, to arrange the contents alphabetically, but a large amount of intelligence on different subjects is thrown promiscuously together under such general heads as *Editorial Notes*, *Literary Notices*, etc. Even the insignificant articles *a* and *the* are often taken as the leading words of titles, because they chance to be the words

with which the titles commence. Thus, the title, "The Pacific Railroad," is found under the letter *T*, and "A Kentuckian in the East," is found under *A*.

It is not unfrequently the case, that important works of history or general literature are sent forth to the world entirely destitute of Indexes. Respecting this class of books, we cannot refrain from saying, in the language of a Boston letter writer, "The man who publishes a book of permanent value, without an Index — what punishment is severe enough for him?"

"No writer," says De Morgan, "is so much read or cited, as the one who makes a good Index."

W. H. W.

BOOK NOTICES.

LIPPINCOT, GRAMBO & Co.'s GAZETTEER. *A New and Complete Gazetteer of the United States, giving a Full and Comprehensive Review of the present Condition, Industry, and Resources of the American Confederacy. Embracing, also, important Topographical, Statistical and Historical Information, from Recent and Original Sources; together with the Results of the Census of 1850, and Population and Statistics, in many cases, to 1853. By Thomas Baldwin and J. Thomas, M. D. Philadelphia: Lippincot, Grambo & Co. 1854.*

This is the most comprehensive Gazetteer of the United States that has as yet appeared. It is compiled with reference to the Census of 1850, and presents the most interesting points of that census, and, in many cases, population, statistics, &c., are presented as derived from censuses taken in the respective States and brought down to a later date than the census of 1850—in some instances as late as 1853. In an Appendix, it gives a table of the Religion and Churches in the United States; of the Agricultural Productions; of the Colleges and Professional Schools; of the Population in each State and Territory, together with a decennial retrospect of the same; of the Military Post Roads and Commands; of the Railroads and Canals up to the latest construction. A volume containing full and accurate information on all of the above topics, not to mention the fact that it gives the locality of every town in the United States, and a descriptive account of all of the cities and of the chief towns, will, without doubt, find a place in every school. It is a *sine qua non* in the Geography and Topography of this country, and is the best work of the kind. It contains 1364 pages, and is accompanied by a large and handsome map.

A COURSE OF ENGLISH READING ADAPTED TO EVERY TASTE AND CAPACITY. *By the Rev. James Pycroft, B. A., Trinity College, Oxford. Edited, with Alterations, Emendations, and Additions, by J. A. Spencer, D. D., Author of "History of Reformation in England," Editor of "The New Testament in Greek, with Notes on the Historical Books," etc., etc. C. S. Francis & Co., 252 Broadway, New York. Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co., 1854.*

However ardently all may wish to make reading their daily solace and a source of constant improvement, very few realize their wishes in both these respects. This failure is attributable to the fact that we are too apt to pursue our course without a proper guide. Not to profit by others' experience causes us much loss of time and advantages. Yet how often is this truism, as some would call it, practically ignored. How to read, and what to read, are, so to speak, complementary terms; neglect either consideration, and the circle of our attainments will be incomplete. The work of Pycroft has been before republished in this country, but without a proper adaptation to the wants of the American student, to say nothing of the very unacceptable style in which it was issued. Neither of these defects appear in the edition of Francis & Co.

We would call the attention of our readers to this work, under the belief that they will concur in our high opinion of its excellence as a guide to youth and to all who wish to form a correct taste in reading.

Crosby & Nichols are the Boston Publishers.

ROLLO BOOKS.—We have received from the publishers, W. J. Reynolds & Co., "Rollo on the Atlantic," and "Rollo in Paris," being numbers one and two of a new series of the Rollo Books, entitled "Rollo's Tour in Europe," to consist of six volumes. This series is from the pen of the Rev. Jacob Abbot, the well-known author of the books which have heretofore been issued under this popular title. We are quite satisfied that it will prove as interesting and instructive as its predecessors. We well remember with what eagerness, in youth, we devoured each new volume of these entertaining works, and we must be candid enough to state, nor is it with shame that we confess it, that, in looking over the pages of this new series, we found ourselves gradually more and more attracted by that which once afforded us so much delight. The main design of the narrative is the communication of useful knowledge.

We have received from the same publishers the following : " Ralph Rattler ; or the Mischief Maker : " " Arthur's Temptation ; or the Lost Goblet : " Minnie's Picnic ; or a Day in the Woods : " " The Runaway ; or Pride Punished : " Arthur's Triumph ; or Goodness Rewarded : " and " Cousin Nelly ; or the Visitor : " being a continuation of the series by Francis Forrester, noticed in a previous number. They will afford much entertainment to the young.

PRIZE ESSAYS.

THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION offers the following prizes for original Essays :

TO MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, for the best Essay, on either of the following subjects, a prize of TWENTY DOLLARS.

1. The self-reporting system.
2. Untruthfulness in schools—its preventives and remedy.

TO the FEMALE TEACHERS of the State, for the best Essay on either of the following subjects, a prize of TWENTY DOLLARS.

1. Easy methods of instruction.
2. Motives to be urged in the business of education.

The Essays must be forwarded to the Secretary, Chas. J. Capen, Esq., Latin School, Boston, on or before the fifteenth of October. Each Essay should be accompanied by a sealed envelope enclosing the name of the writer. The envelopes accompanying unsuccessful Essays will not be opened. The prizes will be awarded by an impartial committee ; but no prize will be awarded to an Essay that is not deemed worthy of one.

The successful Essays will be regarded as the property of the Association.

JOSIAH A. STEARNS, *President.*

Boston, May 12th, 1854.

Mr. Bradford, successor to Tappan & Bradford, 221 Washington street, Boston, is preparing a Lithograph Portrait of N. Tillinghast, Esq., late of the Bridgewater Normal School. It is to be executed in the very best style of Mr. Bradford's well known establishment. Those who are desirous of obtaining a copy can be supplied at the Annual Convention to be held at Bridgewater in August.

Per order of, Committee.